

June 3, 1999

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PSC SEEKS COMMENT ON HOW TO DETERMINE RATES

FOR OPERATOR SERVICE PROVIDERS

The Public Service Commission is seeking comments from interested persons on issues concerning establishment of allowable intrastate rates for telephone calls carried by operator service providers. These are calls made from payphones and other locations, such as hotels, hospitals, airports and jails, where callers dial 0 plus the number being called. Such calls are routed through the operator service provider chosen by the location or payphone owner, and persons placing the calls are often billed exorbitant rates for them.

A new law passed by the 1999 Legislature requires the PSC to set allowable rates for operator service provider calls. After October 1, 1999, if an operator service provider charges a customer more than the allowable rate established by the PSC, then the customer is entitled to sue the operator service provider for three times the call's cost, or \$500, whichever is greater.

Interested persons should submit written comments by June 24 to the PSC, Attention: D99.6.141, PO Box 202601, Helena MT 59620-2601.

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